EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

RECEIVED

MAY 1 4 1999

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

May 14, 1999

EX PARTE

ORIGINAL

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

<u>CC Docket Nos. 97-231; 97-121; 97-208; 97-137; 98-121</u>

Dear Ms. Salas:

Attached is an *ex parte* submission comparing the key elements of the operations support systems (OSS) tests in New York and Texas, which was provided yesterday to Andrea Kearney of the Common Carrier Bureau's Policy and Program Planning Division.

In accordance with section 1.1206(b)(2) of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b)(2), an original and nine copies are being filed with your office.

Sincerely,

Lori Wright
Senior Manager, Regulatory Affairs

cc: Andrea Kearney
        Jake Jennings
        Bill Agee

No. of Copies rec'd _0+9_
List A B C D E

Key Elements of Independent, Third-Party OSS Testing:
A Comparison of the New York and Texas OSS Tests

Key Elements of Third Party OSS Test (Implemented in New York, Except as Noted)	Current Status of Third Party Monitoring of OSS Test in Texas
Role of Third Party. Reliance on an independent, technically-skilled third party to develop the test, conduct it, monitor the results, oversee corrections and retest, and report on the test will expedite the identification and resolution of problems with the BOC's operations support systems (OSS), as well as clarify complex facts for accurate decision-making by state and federal regulatory agencies. (New York chose KPMG and Hewlett Packard to develop, implement, monitor and report on test.) The third party should develop the test plan, working with the interested parties.	The Texas PUC chose Telcordia (formerly Bellcore) to monitor OSS testing by CLECs, raising issues of partiality when Telcordia is to oversee testing of various SWBT systems that Telcordia itself developed. In addition, SWBT remains a major Telcordia customer that Telcordia would no doubt not want to alienate. These concerns were only heightened by SWBT's initial proposal to include this testing project in SWBT's ongoing master service contract with Telcordia. Telcordia provided the master test plan to interested parties on 4/22/99, only after being asked for it on numerous occasions, and three weeks after the UNE-Loop testing began, but the plan is still not comprehensive.

<u>Build Interfaces to Test Documentation</u>. The third party should build all necessary OSS interfaces to determine whether the BOC's documentation is sufficient to permit CLECs to develop their OSS in order to enter the market across the range of order types. The test systems can be built more quickly and cheaply than CLEC systems because they are not integrated into real back-end business operations and need not be as large and robust as actual commercial systems. (HP built the interfaces in New York.) The third party should test and review all supporting documentation for OSS and processes, including business rules, EDI specifications, CLEC handbooks, and other materials. Final specifications and business rules should be tested by the third party to make sure <u>any CLEC</u> could build an interface based only on the documentation, since BOCs will have no incentive to rapidly cure documentation problems after obtaining section 271 authorization.	Texas is testing only the limited OSS interfaces built by AT&T and MCI WorldCom for limited types of service (UNE-Platform and UNE-Loops, respectively). A third CLEC joined the testing late in the process and has offered its collocations to test DSL. However, SWBT is insisting that only ADSL be tested to the exclusion of HDSL and SDSL. AT&T and MCIW were only able to complete their interfaces through a great deal of intervention from the Texas PUC, which is unlikely to be available for future development efforts. Use of CLEC interfaces will also result in BOC claims of bias or malice when problems in the BOC systems are found. Such claims can be largely avoided by use of independent, third-party interfaces.
<u>Change Management</u>. The third party should evaluate change management processes by reviewing actual notices, such as modifications to business rules, to ensure the BOC is complying with established procedures.	Texas has an opportunity to review change management processes with SWBT's December 19 EDI release, but it is unclear what will be done. However, there will be no direct testing of change management beyond the December 19 release.
<u>Performance Measurement Validation</u>. Prior to testing, a performance measurement system must be validated, and the test results must be measured against pre-established performance standards.	This process began the week of May 10, according to SWBT, but CLECs have not yet been provided any documentation of SWBT's data collection process.

<u>Open Process</u>. CLECs should be given access to all materials and assistance provided by the BOC to the third party, to ensure that the development of the third party can be duplicated by competitors in the real world. Minutes should be kept of all contacts between the third party and the BOC and made available to the CLECs. CLEC monitoring of the test ensures that current versions of systems/documentation are being tested and ensures that the third party is not receiving assistance and cooperation the CLECs will not be able to enjoy following section 271 authorization.	CLECs have been involved in the process, although sometimes limited in key technical meetings to only one representative, preventing CLECs from bringing subject matter experts when multiple subjects are discussed. SWBT, by contrast, has been permitted to bring several representatives to each meeting. The Staff of the PUC went so far as to instruct participants not to take any of their concerns to the Commissioners.
<u>Test All Functionalities</u>. The OSS test must be end-to-end, and thoroughly test pre-ordering, ordering, provisioning, maintenance and repair, and billing, including integration of pre-ordering and ordering. The FCC's orders have required proof of access to these functions, all of which are imperative for full scale commercial operation by competitors. (New York planned a four week feature functionality test and a four day volume test of each function.)	See below.
<u>Pre-order</u> should include the testing of functions such as address validation, CSR availability, USOC availability, numbering resource availability, due date interval and availability, editing capabilities, systems integration capabilities, telephone number verification, current PIC status verification, and facilities availability.	In Texas, EDI for pre-ordering will not be tested, even though the only pre-ordering alternative is SWBT's own proprietary (non-industry standard) system.
<u>Order</u> functionalities tested should include access to product and service offerings for both simple and complex orders and promotions, performance of the provisioning and order status reports, editing capabilities and the integration of ordering systems with other systems.	Unresolved.

<u>Provisioning</u> is important to make sure that a sizeable quantity of orders are run through the system from start to finish and actually provisioned. (In New York, 20% of test orders were provisioned, totaling about 3000 orders).	Texas plans to provision 77 orders for UNE-Loops and 525 for UNE-P. MCIW is submitting the UNE-Loop orders over its EDI interface and AT&T is using KPMG to submit its UNE-P orders. It is unclear whether any DSL orders will be submitted, although a CLEC has volunteered for this function.
<u>Maintenance and Repair</u> should include the implementation of the electronic bonding interface, and test functionalities including OSS interface availability, average OSS response interval, average answer time - repair, missed repair appointments, customer trouble report rate, maintenance average duration, percent repeat troubles (within 30 days) and out of service greater than 24 hours. (The New York test only covered Bell Atlantic's proprietary system, RETAS.)	The participating CLECs are responsible for developing their own plans for execution of maintenance testing without guidance from Telcordia.
<u>Billing</u> testing should include invoice accuracy, invoice timeliness, usage data delivery accuracy, usage data delivery timeliness and completeness, and ability to capture usage data for all calls including local and access. The test should also include an audit of the BOC's end-user billing, wholesale billing, reciprocal compensation billing, and access billing. The test should cover three complete billing cycles, which can be compressed in time within the BOC's systems (although the New York test covered only one billing cycle).	The test covers only a two-week billing cycle for UNE-P orders, so there is no opportunity to validate whether SWBT corrects billing errors. Reciprocal compensation is excluded from the scope because SWBT's non-standard record exchange process is excluded. No audit of end-user billing is included in the scope of the test.
<u>Stress Test</u>. A volume stress test appropriate to the market should be required over multiple days. (New York conducted two days of "volume" testing with 4400 and 4500 orders, one day of "peak volume" testing with 6500 orders, and one day of "stress" testing with over 7900 orders, with generally twice as many pre-order transactions each day as orders.)	A total of 8000 volume-test orders will be submitted (but not provisioned). The volume test will be conducted on a Sunday (with SWBT's knowledge) and on another business day during the same week. The schedule was published as part of the master test plan, but when CLECs raised concerns, Telcordia said the published schedule was "illustrative" only.

Test Scenarios. Detailed test scenarios must be developed by the third party for the test, including specific order and customer information. (New York tested 133 scenarios, which represent over 80% of CLEC order types.)	Test scenarios were developed by CLEC participants who are also responsible for all mapping and tracking of test execution. SWBT had significant input and visibility into the development of the scenarios.
Full Range of Orders. The test should cover the full range of orders that would permit all modes of market entry including, but not limited to, UNE combinations. This is needed to ensure that OSS for all methods of entry contemplated by the Telecommunications Act is available to CLECs regardless of whether other barriers currently prevent CLECs from entering the local market.	The test will involve only UNE-Loops, UNE-P orders, and possibly ADSL orders (although the details for the ADSL orders are unclear).
Realistic Mix of Orders. The test should involve the types of orders that are likely in a competitive environment, and CLECs should be able to provide input to the third party.	A variety of scenarios will be tested.
Submission of Orders. The third party should develop, submit, and track the Local Service Requests (LSRs) based on BOC provided documentation.	MCIW is submitting its UNE-Loop orders; AT&T is submitting its UNE-P orders.
Test Bed. A large quantity of numbers is needed for the test, and information related to the numbers must be reviewed to ensure that the BOC is not providing "clean" data, or else problems will not be identified which will hinder local competition. (Bell Atlantic provided a test bed of about 7000 numbers for the New York test.)	MCIW required to use its own numbers because SWBT refused to provide a test bed.
"Blind" Testing. For volume testing, orders should be submitted to the BOC without it knowing when they will arrive, to avoid the BOC being prepared only on the specific days of the test.	In its timeline, Telcordia identified the dates when volume testing would occur, later noting that those dates were simply "illustrative."
Collocation. The process for ordering and obtaining CLEC collocation within BOC end offices must be tested.	Not in the current scope of the Texas test.

xDSL OSS Capabilities. Due to the rapidly developing market for broadband and data services, BOC support for all types of xDSL is vital to the future of competition and should be tested as fully as possible. In particular, access to loop qualification and BOC bandwidth management information must be tested, along with other xDSL specific systems. (New York tested related issues with ISDN.)	SWBT is refusing to allow testing of any xDSL except ADSL.
Documentation and Tracking. Beginning with formulation of the test plan and continuing through the testing process, issues that arise should be fully documented with a system to monitor and track them, so that important matters are not overlooked. (In New York, a list of numerous outstanding issues raised by the parties which needed further action was maintained under the rubric of the "Parking Lot." During the test itself, the third party provided written documentation of problems uncovered in the test, called "Exception Reports," on which the BOC and other parties were permitted to comment.)	Neither Telcordia nor the Staff of the PUC has identified how problems or deficiencies in SWBT's OSS will be documented, when corrections are to occur, or how any disputes are to be resolved.
"Regression" Testing after Problems Found. The third party should retest any fixes that are made by the BOC to ensure both that the problem has been fixed and that no other problem has been created by the change. (The third party in New York is "retesting" as it committed to do, and may conduct regression testing but has not clearly defined the bounds.)	Burden is on the CLECs to conduct any regression testing they consider necessary. Telcordia does not plan to conduct any regression testing.

<u>Proof, Not Promises</u>. The goal of testing is to find and fix problems that would prevent local competition, rather than relying on promises of adequate performance. The BOC must demonstrate that the problems have been resolved before the test is completed.	Not clear how success will be measured in Texas. In addition to the lack of pass/fail criteria, there is no process for correcting the OSS problems uncovered and clearing the path to local competition. Moreover, an onus has been placed on the CLECs. A key PUC Staff member has indicated that the test is to focus on the CLECs' systems as well, stating, "The [Texas] commission has put some pressure on the CLECs to get their EDI up . . . . We took the position that we're making Southwestern Bell do all this stuff because you [the CLECs] needed it. We need to see progress on your side."